1   Claims

2

3   1.   A method, including the steps of

4   associating an abbreviation with a multimedia object;

5   receiving a set of sequences of keystrokes and mouse actions;

6   when said abbreviation is detected in said set of sequences of keystrokes

7   and mouse actions, replacing said abbreviation with said multimedia object.

8

9   2.   A method as in claim 1, wherein said abbreviation comprises a rela-

10   tively short sequence of keystrokes or mouse actions.

11

12   3.   A method as in claim 1, wherein said abbreviation comprises a typed

13   word.

14

15   4.   A method as in claim 1, including the step of communicating said

16   multimedia object to a recipient as an electronic chat message or an electronic mail mes-

17   sage.

18

19   5.   A method as in claim 1, including the step of presenting said multi-

20   media object to a recipient in place of said abbreviation.

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1   6.   A method as in claim 1, wherein each said multimedia object has a

2   set of editable properties.

3

4   7.   A method as in claim 6, wherein said editable properties are effective

5   to select among a set of alternative multimedia objects, said alternative multimedia ob-

6   jects differing in the effective editable property.

7

8   8.   A method as in claim 6, wherein said editable properties include a

9   size of said multimedia object, a complexity of said multimedia object, or a degree of de-

10   tail of said multimedia object.

11

12   9.   A method as in claim 6, wherein said editable properties are editable

13   in response to a set of editing abbreviations.

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15   10.   A method as in claim 9, wherein each said editing abbreviation com-

16   prises a relatively short sequence of keystrokes or mouse actions.

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18   11.   A method as in claim 6, including the steps of

19   communicating at least one of said editable properties to a recipient with

20   said multimedia object; and

21   presenting said multimedia object to said recipient in accordance with said

22   at least one of said editable properties.

1

2   12.   A method as in claim 11, including the step of conditionally overrid-

3 ing at least one of said editable properties in response to a capability of said recipientÕs

4 presentation device, whereby said multimedia object is presented to said recipient in ac-

5 cordance with a different at least one of said editable properties.

6

7   13.   A method as in claim 11, including the step of conditionally overrid-

8 ing at least one of said editable properties in response to an action by said recipient,

9 whereby said multimedia object is presented to said recipient in accordance with a differ-

10 ent at least one of said editable properties.

11

12   14.   A method as in claim 13, wherein said action includes time taken by

13 said recipient to review the multimedia object.

14

15   15.   A method as in claim 1, wherein said multimedia objects include a

16 text object, a sound object, a picture object, an animation object, or a program fragment.

17

18   16.   A method as in claim 15, wherein said program fragments include an

19 applet, an application, a pointer to a database retrieval engine, or a URL.

20

17.   A method as in claim 1, including the step of associating an ensemble with a set of said multimedia objects, said ensemble having a set of ensemble properties.

18.   A method as in claim 17, wherein said ensemble properties are effective to select among a set of alternative multimedia objects for each multimedia object in said set.

19.   A method as in claim 17, wherein said ensemble properties include a theme, said theme being effective to select, for each multimedia object in said ensemble, one multimedia object from a set of multimedia objects associated with said theme.

20.   A method as in claim 17, wherein said ensemble properties are editable in response to a set of editing abbreviations.

21.   A method as in claim 20, wherein each said editing abbreviation comprises a relatively short sequence of keystrokes or mouse actions.

22.   A method as in claim 17, including the steps of

communicating at least one of said ensemble properties to a recipient with an electronic chat message or an electronic mail message; and

1   presenting said multimedia objects to said recipient in accordance with said

2   at least one of said ensemble properties.

3

4   23.   A method as in claim 22, including the step of conditionally overrid-

5   ing at least one of said ensemble properties in response to a capability of said recipient's

6   presentation device, whereby said multimedia objects are presented to said recipient in

7   accordance with a different at least one of said ensemble properties.

8

9   24.   A method as in claim 22, including the step of conditionally overrid-

10 ing at least one of said ensemble properties in response to an action by said recipient,

11 whereby said multimedia objects are presented to said recipient in accordance with a dif-

12 ferent at least one of said ensemble properties.

13

14   25.   A method as in claim 24, wherein said action includes time taken by

15 said recipient to review the multimedia objects.

16

17   26.   A method as in claim 1, including the steps of

18   receiving a set of multimedia objects; and

19   when one multimedia object in said set is detected having an associated ab-

20 breviation, replacing said multimedia object with said abbreviation.

21

27.   A method as in claim 26, wherein said set of multimedia objects are associated with an ensemble.

28.   A method as in claim 26, wherein said set of multimedia objects are included in a web page or a web site.

29.   A method as in claim 26, including the step of transmitting a set of associations of said abbreviations with said multimedia objects.

30.   A method as in claim 26, including the step of transmitting said set of multimedia objects after having inserted said abbreviations and before having removed said abbreviations.

31.   A system, including

a database having a set of abbreviations, each associated with at least one corresponding multimedia object;

an input device for a sequence of keystrokes or mouse actions;

means for detecting at least one of said abbreviations in said sequence and for replacing said abbreviation with said at least one corresponding multimedia object.

32.   A system as in claim 31, wherein each said abbreviation comprises a relatively short sequence of keystrokes or mouse actions.

33.   A system as in claim 31, wherein each said abbreviation comprises a typed word.

34.   A system as in claim 31, including means for communicating said multimedia object to a recipient as an electronic chat message or an electronic mail message.

35.   A system as in claim 31, including means for presenting said multimedia object to a recipient in place of said abbreviation.

36.   A system as in claim 31, wherein each said multimedia object has a set of editable properties.

37.   A system as in claim 36, wherein said editable properties are effective to select among a set of alternative multimedia objects, said alternative multimedia objects differing in the effective editable property.

38.   A system as in claim 36, wherein said editable properties include a size of said multimedia object, a complexity of said multimedia object, or a degree of detail of said multimedia object.

39. A system as in claim 36, wherein said editable properties are editable in response to a set of editing abbreviations.

40. A system as in claim 39, wherein each said editing abbreviation comprises a relatively short sequence of keystrokes or mouse actions.

41. A system as in claim 36, including

means for communicating at least one of said editable properties to a recipient with said multimedia object; and

means for presenting said multimedia object to said recipient in accordance with said at least one of said editable properties.

42. A system as in claim 41, including means for conditionally overriding at least one of said editable properties in response to a capability of said recipientÕs presentation device, whereby said multimedia object is presented to said recipient in accordance with a different at least one of said editable properties.

43. A system as in claim 41, including means for conditionally overriding at least one of said editable properties in response to an action by said recipient, whereby said multimedia object is presented to said recipient in accordance with a different at least one of said editable properties.

1   44.   A system as in claim 43, wherein said action includes time taken by

2 said recipient to review the multimedia object.

3

4   45.   A system as in claim 31, wherein said multimedia objects include a

5 text object, a sound object, a picture object, an animation object, or a program fragment.

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7   46.   A system as in claim 45, wherein said program fragments include an

8 applet, an application, a pointer to a database retrieval engine, or a URL.

9

10   47.   A system as in claim 31, including means for associating an ensem-

11 ble with a set of said multimedia objects, said ensemble having a set of ensemble proper-

12 ties.

13

14   48.   A system as in claim 47, wherein said ensemble properties are effec-

15 tive to select among a set of alternative multimedia objects for each multimedia object in

16 said set.

17

18   49.   A system as in claim 47, wherein said ensemble properties include a

19 theme, said theme being effective to select, for each multimedia object in said ensemble,

20 one multimedia object from a set of multimedia objects associated with said theme.

21

1   50.   A system as in claim 47, wherein said ensemble properties are edit-

2   able in response to a set of editing abbreviations.

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4   51.   A system as in claim 50, wherein each said editing abbreviation

5   comprises a relatively short sequence of keystrokes or mouse actions.

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7   52.   A system as in claim 47, including

8   means for communicating at least one of said ensemble properties to a re-

9   cipient with an electronic chat message or an electronic mail message; and

10   means for presenting said multimedia objects to said recipient in accordance

11   with said at least one of said ensemble properties.

12

13   53.   A system as in claim 52, including means for conditionally overrid-

14   ing at least one of said ensemble properties in response to a capability of said recipientÕs

15   presentation device, whereby said multimedia objects are presented to said recipient in

16   accordance with a different at least one of said ensemble properties.

17

18   54.   A system as in claim 52, including means for conditionally overrid-

19   ing at least one of said ensemble properties in response to an action by said recipient,

20   whereby said multimedia objects are presented to said recipient in accordance with a dif-

21   ferent at least one of said ensemble properties.

22

1   55.   A system as in claim 54, wherein said action includes time taken by

2   said recipient to review the multimedia objects.

3

4   56.   A system as in claim 31, including

5   means for receiving a set of multimedia objects; and

6   means for detecting when one multimedia object in said set has an associ-

7   ated abbreviation, for replacing said multimedia object with said abbreviation.

8

9   57.   A system as in claim 56, wherein said set of multimedia objects are

10   associated with an ensemble.

11

12   58.   A system as in claim 56, wherein said set of multimedia objects are

13   included in a web page or a web site.

14

15   59.   A system as in claim 56, including means for transmitting a set of

16   associations of said abbreviations with said multimedia objects.

17

18   60.   A system as in claim 56, including means for transmitting said set of

19   multimedia objects after having inserted said abbreviations and before having removed

20   said abbreviations.